

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES**

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**DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH**

<http://dmh.lacounty.gov>

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May 13, 2009

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Marvin J. Southard, D.S.W.  
Director of Mental Health

SUBJECT: **RESPONSE TO ISSUES RAISED DURING PUBLIC TESTIMONY ON  
APRIL 14, 2009**

At your April 14, 2009 Board meeting, Supervisor Knabe requested that the Director of Mental Health report on some of the issues raised during public testimony by the Black Los Angeles County Client Coalition (BLACCC). Attached is our report summarizing the issues and action taken by the Department of Mental Health (DMH) in response to the concerns raised by BLACCC.

MJS:bjj

Attachment

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors  
Chief Executive Officer  
Sheila Shima, Deputy CEO

**BOARD AGENDA ITEM NO. 22**  
**APRIL 14, 2009**  
**ISSUES RAISED DURING PUBLIC TESTIMONY**

**Loretta Leilani-Zachary** – Raised the issue on the hiring of Peer Advocates.

DMH Action – Human Resource staff followed-up May 8, 2009. Ms. Zachary is interested in participating in the Peer Advocate Training in order to obtain a certificate. The DMH Office of Empowerment and Advocacy will contact her when the training program becomes available again. Ms. Zachary has a vocational nursing certificate and is interested in pursuing something in that field. Human Resources sent her employment bulletins that will require that type of certificate.

**Sharon Lyle** – Wanted membership at the Underserved Racial & Ethnic Populations (UREP).

DMH Action – Ms. Lyle was recommended for membership on the UREP Committee; she was accepted and attended the meeting on April 30, 2009. Ms. Lyle was grateful for her inclusion.

**Balenciaga Muldrew** – She has been homeless for years, needs facilitation with Shelter Plus Care but lacks required current ID.

DMH Action – Ms. Muldrew was counseled and applied for ID at DMV on May 4, 2009. Case Manager advised her to turn in application together with receipt and copy of expired ID. Ms. Muldrew complained against Case Manager. She was advised to follow the agency complaint process; if dissatisfied, to file complaint with Patients' Rights Office.

**Denise Drinkard** – Wanted to be on the MHSA Housing Advisory Board.

DMH Action – Ms. Drinkard was recommended and her application is currently being reviewed.

**Mattie Coleman** – Wants to be hired as a Peer Advocate within DMH.

DMH Action – Ms. Coleman was orientated on the employment process and an application form was sent to her via e-mail.

**Nia Layton** – Did not speak at the Board meeting but was with the other ladies and expressed her need for employment as Peer Advocate within DMH.

DMH Action – Ms. Layton was given orientation on the employment process and was emailed the application form.

**Osbee Sangster** – On our follow up phone call, she did not specify her issues. Instead she referred us to the transcript of the April 14, 2009 BOS meeting and to a letter she shared at that meeting. Mr. James Sokalski of CEO helped us with copies of her letter dated July 13, 2008 and of a petition dated October 22, 2009. All these documents raised many issues some of which are non-DMH related. In summary, the DMH-related issues were (1) the need to increase consumer-driven services in clinics, (2) to incentivize consumer participation in program planning, implementation, and evaluation, and (3) to have some funding for BLACCC.

DMH has in place multi-layered stakeholder processes where consumers can share their concerns and suggestions. The Director of Empowerment and Advocacy has been assigned to assist BLACCC in directing their ideas to the appropriate channels so their participation would become more meaningful.

MJS:AH:bjj  
5/13/09